

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: ENHANCING ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT FOR DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY INNOVATIVE TEACHING PRACTICES IN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

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The term Community of Practice (CoP) has become something of a buzz word in the field of scholarship of learning and teaching, but the concept of meeting with like-minded colleagues to discuss and share common areas of interest is age old (Wenger, 2000). In 2011, a CoP called Innovative Teaching @ Waite was established within the School of Agriculture Food and Wine at The University of Adelaide. The aim of the CoP was to provide an informal, supportive environment for academics involved in teaching to meet and discuss issues related to learning and teaching. To provide focus at each forum, a relevant speaker is invited to share their ideas followed by an opportunity for questions and discussion. The invited speaker may be from the school, university or the wider community. Over 5 years the CoP has developed into a key part of the academic calendar. Academic staff now volunteer to present at the CoP and more forums have been scheduled throughout the year to accommodate demand. The success of the CoP has led to a significant change in the profile of learning and teaching within the school and increased implementation of innovative teaching methodologies across many courses. The reputation of this forum led to the launch of a biannual Innovative Teaching Exhibition to showcase best practice learning and teaching. Survey evidence from academic staff indicates that there is now wider application of teaching and learning pedagogies such as Team Based Learning, Flipped Classroom, E-assessment and Online learning within the school. The growth, momentum and positive impact that the CoP has had on learning and teaching community within the school will be discussed.

Paragraph Text

Wenger, E (2000) Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems. *Organization*, 7(2) 225-24.

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